

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

25 April 1951

SUBJECT: NIE-25 (Draft for Board consideration)

APOLOGIA

I understood that I was merely to revise the 26 March draft ("Possible Soviet Courses of Action"), but when at last I was able to get to it I found it desirable to adopt a radically different approach to the subject and to submit a new draft of the estimate as a whole. That was necessary in order to take due account of the Consultants' just criticism of "NIE 3/1", which is equally applicable to A-BI 14 and all its progeny. Indeed, as one of the joint authors of A-BI 14 and of previous examples of that form of literature I have felt strongly that ONE should break out of the straightjacket of that form and make a radical new departure in its approach to the subject.

The faults of A-BI 14 and papers like it are attributable to a misapplication of a rigid military form designed for another purpose, the estimation of a specific limited situation as a means of reaching a definite decision regarding an immediate course of action. As such that form has a snapshot, static effect and is unsuitable for the estimation of a complex and moving situation having a past and a future full of contingent possibilities.

In this draft I have endeavored to introduce historical perspective, as called for by [REDACTED], without going back to Ivan the Terrible or to Karl Marx, and have also endeavored to indicate the contingent aspect of Soviet intentions, as suggested by Dr.

25X1A9a

25X1A [REDACTED] I have omitted quantities of descriptive matter, order of battle, and war gaming, as inappropriate to this level of estimation. There is no formal catalog of capabilities as such in the abstract, but they are referred to in broad terms as they naturally occur in the discussion of the situation and the possible courses of Soviet action.

Having completed my draft, I find that it bears scant resemblance to the standard literature on "Capabilities and Intentions." I have therefore ventured to change the title and the statement of

the problem.

DOCUMENT NO. 7

NO CHANGE IN CLASS. ☐

☐ DECLASSIFIED

CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS (S) C

NEXT REVIEW DATE: 12 Feb 81

AUTH: HR 70-2

DATE: 12 Feb 81 REVIEWER: 009256